

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 3 was objected to because of informality; and Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 4-58033 (hereinafter "JP '033").

Claims 1-6 have been amended and Claims 7-11 have been added herein. Claims 1-6 have been amended to clarify the subject matters recited therein, and new Claims 7-11 find clear support in the original specification, claims and drawings. For example, Claims 7 and 11 is supported by page 4, line 20, to page 6, line 13 as well as Figures 2-3, Claim 8 by page 6, line 14, to page 7, line 19 as well as Figures 2-4, Claim 9 by page 5, lines 14-20, as well as Figure 3C, and Claim 10 by page 5, line 21, to page 6, line 6. Hence, no new matter is believed to be added thereby. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language.

Briefly recapitulating, Claim 1 of the present invention is directed to a mounting structure for a vehicle electrical connection box, including a protruding member provided to a box body of the electrical connection box and positioned to receive an impact from a first direction, and at least one breakable mounting member mounting the box body to a part of a vehicle, the at least one breakable mounting member positioned to break due to a stress generated by the impact received by the protruding member. By providing such a protruding member and positioning the breakable mounting member as such, the impact from the first direction causes a stress concentrated at the breakable mounting member, thereby causing a shearing stress to break the breakable mounting member rather than the box body. As a

result, damage to the vehicle electrical connection box is minimized or significantly reduced and the circuit inside the vehicle electrical connection box is protected effectively.¹

JP '033 discloses an electrical connection box. Nevertheless, JP '033 teaches neither “a protruding member provided to a box body of the electrical connection box and positioned to receive an impact from a first direction” nor “at least one breakable mounting member mounting the box body to a part of a vehicle, the at least one breakable mounting member positioned to break due to a stress generated by the impact received by the protruding member” as recited in amended Claim 1. On the other hand, JP '033 only discloses the connector connection members 4 provided for connecting wirings (W) on the opposite side of the mounting members 7.² As such, an impact exerted upon the connector connection members 4 would likely to dent the casing inwardly before the impact is transmitted to the mounting members 7. Therefore, the structure recited in amended Claim 1 is clearly distinguishable from JP '033, and thus is not anticipated thereby.

Likewise, independent Claim 2 includes subject matter substantially similar to what is recited in Claim 1 to the extent discussed above. Thus, Claim 2 is also distinguishable from JP '033.

Turning to Claim 3, Claim 3 is directed to a mounting structure for a vehicle electrical connection box having a box body comprising at least two breakable planar mounting members mounting the box body to a part of a vehicle, extending substantially along a first plane and diagonally positioned to break after the box body receive an impact in a direction substantially parallel to the first plane. However, JP '033 does not teach at least two

¹ Specification, page 8, lines 18-25.

² See, for example, JP '033, Figures 1 and 2.

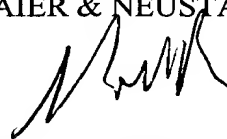
breakable planar mounting members mounting the box body to a part of a vehicle, extending substantially along a first plane and diagonally positioned to break after the box body receive an impact in a direction substantially parallel to the first plane. Instead, JP '033 discloses the mounting members 7 which are provided parallel to each other, and does not suggest that the mounting members 7 are designed to break upon receiving an impact "in a direction substantially parallel to the first plane [in which the mounting members extend]." Thus, the structure recited in amended Claim 3 is believed to be distinguishable for JP '033 and thus is not anticipated thereby.

For the foregoing reasons, Claims 1-3 are believed to be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 4-10 ultimately depend from one of Claims 1-3, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 4-10 are believed to be allowable as well.

In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1-3, 5 and 6 and add new Claims 7-11 as follows:

--1. (Amended) A mounting structure for a vehicle electrical connection box, [for protecting the electrical connection box upon collision of the vehicle,] comprising:

a protruding member provided to a box body of the electrical connection box[, the protruding member being arranged to receive the impact of a collision before the box body does] and positioned to receive an impact from a first direction; and

at least one breakable mounting member [extended from] mounting the box body [and fixed] to a part of [the] a vehicle, [at a front end thereof;] the at least one breakable mounting member positioned to break due to a stress generated by the impact received by the protruding member [wherein,

a portion of force of the impact received by the protruding member acts on the mounting member in a direction that intersects with the longitudinal direction of the mounting member].

2. (Amended) A mounting structure for a vehicle electrical connection box [which is] arranged rearward of and in the vicinity of a dash panel serving as a partition between an engine space [of the] in a vehicle and an adjacent compartment, comprising:

a protruding member [provided to] extending from a box body of the electrical connection box toward the dash panel[, the protruding member being arranged to receive the

impact of a collision of the vehicle before the box body does] and positioned to receive an impact from a first direction; and

at least one breakable planar mounting member [extended from] mounting the box body [and] to a [part of the vehicle at a front end thereof, wherein:

the electrical connection box is fixed to a] cowl side panel of the vehicle, [through the mounting member extended from the box body; and] extending

[a portion of force of the impact received by the protruding member acts on the mounting member] in a direction intersecting [a longitudinal] the first direction, and positioned to break due to a stress generated by the impact received by the at least one breakable planar mounting member, [of the mounting member]

wherein the dash panel is provided substantially perpendicular to the cowl side panel.

3. (Amended) A mounting structure for a vehicle electrical connection box[, for protecting the electrical connection box when the vehicle receives impact,] having a box body [of the electrical connection box being arranged to receives a portion of the impact from a part of the vehicle,] comprising at least two breakable planar mounting members [extended from] mounting the box body [, each mounting member being fixed] to a part of [the] a vehicle, [at a front end thereof, each mounting member being formed to have high geometrical rigidity in a longitudinal direction; wherein,

a portion of the impact received by the electrical connection box acts on each mounting member in a direction that intersects with the longitudinal direction of the mounting member] extending substantially along a first plane and diagonally positioned to break after the box body receive an impact in a direction substantially parallel to the first plane.

4. (Amended) A mounting structure according to one of claims 1 to [3] 2, wherein the protruding member is positioned such that the box body receives the [line of action of] impact [received by the box body extends] off the center of rotation of the box body.

5. (Amended) A mounting structure according to claim [1 or] 2, wherein the protruding member is provided with at least one reinforcing rib extending along [the] a direction in which the impact is transmitted.

6. (Amended) A mounting structure according to claim [1 or] 2, wherein at least a portion of the at least one breakable planar mounting member extends in a direction [perpendicular to the] intersecting with a direction in which the impact is transmitted [upon collision of the vehicle].

7. - 11. (New) --